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October 21, 2013

PRESS ADVISORY

**Online Press Conference on
“U.S. Foreign Policy and Security Cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa”**

Wednesday, October 23, 2013 at 12:00 p.m. (noon)

U.S. Embassy Dakar, Route des Almadies

Please join us on **Wednesday, October 23, 2013, at 12:00 GMT at the U.S. Embassy**, for an online press conference featuring **AFRICOM Commanding General David M. Rodriguez and Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield**. General Rodriguez and Assistant Secretary Thomas-Greenfield will discuss U.S. foreign policy and security cooperation in sub-Saharan Africa.

LiveAtState is the U.S. Department of State’s interactive on-line video platform for engaging with international media on the top foreign policy issues of the day. Invited journalists from around the world will be able to submit questions and receive live video answers from U.S. policymakers through this on-the-record “virtual press briefing” format. By harnessing cutting edge webchat technology, we are able to cross borders and time zones more than ever before, offering international media new opportunities for engaging in meaningful discussion with U.S. policymakers. Past LiveAtState programs may be viewed on www.state.gov/liveatstate

The briefing will be in English.

For more information or RSVP, please contact Thierry Pina by phone at 77 333 37 13 or by mail at usembassymedia@state.gov.

Biographies:



General David M. Rodriguez
Commander
United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM)
Term of Appointment: 04/05/2013 to present

General David M. Rodriguez became the third commander of U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM), headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, on April 5, 2013. U.S. Africa Command is one of six unified geographic combatant commands within the Department of Defense unified command structure.

A native of West Chester, Pennsylvania, General Rodriguez earned his commission from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York in 1976.

General Rodriguez has commanded at every level. His previous assignment was Commanding General of the United States Army Forces Command. Additional commands include: the International Security Assistance Force - Joint Command (IJC) in Afghanistan; the 82nd Airborne Division; 2nd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division; and 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). He commanded companies in 75th Ranger Regiment, and 1st Armored Division.

General Rodriguez's Army and Joint experiences include: Commander, IJC in Afghanistan; Senior Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense; Commander, Joint Task Force 82 in Afghanistan; Joint Staff Deputy Director, Regional Operations (J3); and Defense Joint Exercise Officer, United Nations Command, United States Forces Korea.

General Rodriguez's combat experiences include: G-3 Planner, XVIII Airborne Corps, Operation Just Cause, 1989-1990; Operations Officer, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, 1990-1991; Assistant Division Commander, 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized), 2003; Commander, Multi-National Division-Northwest, 2005; Commander, Joint Task Force-82 in Afghanistan, 2007-2008; and Deputy Commander, United States Forces Afghanistan and Commander, International Security Assistance Force - Joint Command, 2009-2011.

General Rodriguez holds a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies from the United States Naval War College and a Masters of Military Art and Science from the United States Army Command and General Staff College.

General Rodriguez's awards and decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, numerous foreign awards, Combat Infantryman Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, and Ranger Tab.

He is married to the former Virginia E. Flaherty of Red Bank, New Jersey and they have four children; Amy, Melissa, David, and Andrew.

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Linda Thomas-Greenfield

Assistant Secretary

Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Term of Appointment: 08/06/2013 to present

Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, a member of the Career Foreign Service, was confirmed by the Senate on August 1, 2013 and sworn in on August 6, 2013 as the next Assistant Secretary for African Affairs.

Prior to assuming her current position, as Director General she led a team of about 400 employees who carried out the full range of personnel functions for the State Department's 60,000-strong workforce - from recruitment and hiring, through evaluations and promotions, to retirement.

Since beginning her Foreign Service career in 1982 as a consular officer in Kingston, Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield has risen through the ranks to the Minister Counselor level. Overseas she has served in Jamaica, Nigeria, The Gambia, Kenya, Pakistan, Switzerland (at the U.S. Mission to the UN), and most recently as Ambassador to the Republic of Liberia, where she served from 2008 to 2012. In Washington she has worked in the Bureau of Human Resources, as well as the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, where she was a Deputy Assistant Secretary from 2004 to 2006, and the Bureau of African Affairs, where she was Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary from 2006 to 2008.

Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield was the 2000 recipient of the Warren Christopher Award for Outstanding Achievement in Global Affairs in recognition of her work with refugees. She has received several Superior, Meritorious, and Performance awards, including the Presidential Meritorious Service Award. She was a 2010 inductee into the Louisiana State University Alumni Association Hall of Distinction.

Prior to joining the Department of State, Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield taught political science at Bucknell University in Pennsylvania. She earned a bachelor's degree from Louisiana State University and a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin, where she also did work towards a doctorate.

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